

FIFTY-SECOND
ANNUAL REPORT

MECHANICS'
INSTITUTE

SAN FRANCISCO
1907

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE
Library and Reading and Chess Room
99 Grove Street, corner of Polk Street
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

The Mechanics'-Mercantile Library was re-established at the above address shortly after the general conflagration of 1906—it contains already over 20,000 volumes and is being rapidly increased.

It is the purpose of the Management to bring the Library to its former efficiency as soon as possible.

The Reading Room list of periodicals embraces the title of over 500 newspapers, magazines, reviews and journals.

Members may withdraw two books at a time and extra books on payment of five cents each.

Books (except new fiction) may be retained for two weeks and then renewed for two weeks longer.

New fiction can be kept out one week and can not be renewed.

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP.

Entrance Fee	\$ 1.00
Quarterly Dues	1.50
Life Membership	50.00

Library open, 9 a. m. to 9 p. m.
Sundays and Holidays, 11 a. m. to 4 p. m.

Fifty-Second Annual Report

OF THE

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

FOR THE

Year Ending February 28, 1907

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.
1907

OFFICERS

BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

Year ending February 28, 1907.

L. R. MEAD.....	President
RUDOLPH J. TAUSSIG.....	Vice President
JAMES G. SPAULDING.....	Recording Secretary
JAMES H. LYONS.....	Corresponding Secretary
GEORGE BEANSTON.	ALPHEUS BULL.*
TIREY L. FORD.	EDWARD P. HEALD.
LIVINGSTON JENKS.	BYRON MAUZY.
ROBERT W. NEAL.	JAMES SPIERS.
OTTO VON GELDERN.	LUTHER WAGONER.

JOSEPH M. CUMMING.....	Secretary
FREDERICK J. TEGGART.....	Librarian

* Deceased.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

San Francisco, March 7, 1907.

To the Members of the Mechanics' Institute:

I have the honor to submit to you my report for the past year.

One year ago President Taussig in his annual report stated that the Institute was entering on an era of prosperity—its membership was steadily increasing, the Mechanics Pavilion had been leased for a larger rental than ever before received, the consolidation with the Mercantile Library Association had been consummated and the sixty-odd thousand volumes of the Mercantile Library were in process of preparation for transfer to the Mechanics' Institute building to be incorporated with the Institute's Library. At that time the Institute had about \$34,000 cash in banks, against which the Pavilion block was encumbered with a mortgage of \$36,000.

In the great fire of last April the Institute lost its Post-street building, its library of nearly two hundred thousand volumes, the Mechanics' Pavilion and all other improvements on the Pavilion block.

Two weeks before the fire the insurance on the Pavilion was increased \$15,000. The total insurance on all the property carried at the time of the fire was \$129,995 in 30 different companies. We have had the common vexatious experience of all other claimants, but all of our insurance has been settled except \$14,500; the amount received on policies settled has averaged nearly 90 per cent, and from the outstanding claims it is expected that several thousand dollars will be received.

On the morning of April 18th, through the courtesy of the Crocker National Bank the Secretary was able to get some of the records into its safe deposit vault; the contents of the two safes in the Library building were uninjured, but every-

thing in the large brick vault in the basement was totally destroyed. The records saved consisted of about twenty-five years' minutes, the members' ledger, some leases and contracts and a few other records, among them the original copy of the Institute's Constitution with signatures of the members.

The only thing unharmed in the building was the bronze cast of James Lick, the only man who ever bequeathed a dollar to the Institute, and which is now hung in this room.

The next regular meeting of the Trustees after the fire fell on May 1st and President Taussig called a meeting for that date at his home; as some of the Trustees could not be found, there were but seven, or one short of a quorum, present, so the meeting had to be of an informal nature. One week later a special meeting was held at the home of Trustee George Beanston and the acts of May 1st ratified.

At this meeting of May 1st the Trustees present were unanimous in the opinion that the Institute should lose no time in showing its faith in the future of the city and that the members should be provided as soon as possible with a place which would to some extent be what the former building had been to them.

The Post-street site being out of the question, it was determined to erect a temporary building on the Pavilion lot at the corner of Grove and Polk streets, and the President was authorized to proceed at once with its erection.

Lumber was ordered immediately and arrangements made for beginning construction. Just at that time there was some uneasiness as to the course of the insurance companies and there was a feeling that possibly by clearing the lot and building before losses were adjusted the insurance claims might be jeopardized. Work was therefore delayed till this matter could be settled without injury to the Institute's rights.

Meanwhile a rough shack was erected for an office on the east side of the Pavilion lot and on May 23rd last the Institute's office was opened therein, and from here a circular was

sent out informing the members of the Library's new location.

Construction was begun on June 4th, and after many heart-breaking trials over delayed material, scarcity of workmen, etc., this new building in which we meet tonight was opened in August, about four months after the fire.

Last month, in response to the requests of many members, a chess room was provided in the building.

This building cost \$6,216.27, and the shelving and furniture \$4,010.76, making a cost for building, furniture and fixtures of \$10,227.03.

At the meeting of May 1st Librarian Teggart was also present and submitted a plan for the re-establishment of the Library.

Mr. Teggart suggested that the first thing to be done was to get everything that could be obtained on architecture, building construction and engineering, in fact everything that would be necessary or useful to aid in rebuilding the city. He outlined a plan for obtaining these books from book dealers and other libraries. The Trustees approved his plans and instructed him to proceed, and at the meeting of May 8th he was authorized to spend \$5,000 at once in the purchase of books.

The Librarian proceeded at once, and kept his office at his home in Berkeley, where the books were delivered and where, during the construction of the building, the preliminary work of preparing the books was carried on.

By the time this building was ready this work had progressed so that in August the Library opened with about five thousand volumes. This number has now grown to over seventeen thousand, and is rapidly increasing, so that I fear very soon we shall be confronted with the ever-present problem we had on Post street—how to find more room.

I would call your attention to the splendid selection of technical works which have already demonstrated their use-

fulness many times over; to our large and well-selected Library on accountancy and general business and finance.

There is also a collection of dictionaries, encyclopedias and other reference books and a large amount of fiction. Literature and history will follow shortly.

We have received many kindnesses from other libraries and learned societies, the names of which are given in the Librarian's report. In addition, our thanks are due to ex-President David Kerr for a complete set of the reports of the Mechanics' Institute Expositions.

The Librarian's report will show that good use is being made of the Library. At present the Library closes at 6 P. M., but as soon as the streets are in better condition and we have more lights and improved car service, we expect to open evenings.

The past year has put to the test the loyalty of our members, and they have responded nobly. The members have been most patient while we were being re-established and no difficulty has been found in collecting dues from those whom it has been possible to find.

Many members did not realize how much the Institute meant to them until they were deprived of its privileges; while it is true since the fire we have lost nearly a thousand members, very many of these have withdrawn because they have left the city, and as no location could be found that would be as central as the old home, others have withdrawn because this present location is not convenient. In very many cases we have been notified that members will rejoin as soon as they return to the city, or when we are in a more accessible location.

Feeling that no charge should be made for the time the Institute was not performing services for the members, the Board remitted the dues for four months.

The usual winter lecture course was begun last November. Professor H. Morse Stephens has already delivered eight of the series on "History and Historians" at Lane Hall.

The attendance at these lectures has been surprising and indicates that they should be continued each winter.

Arrangements have been made in conjunction with the Affiliated Society of Bank Clerks to have three lectures delivered in this building by Professor A. C. Miller and one of them has already been given.

Last November President Taussig resigned the Presidency and the Trustees honored me with that office.

The Institute met with a serious loss in the death of Trustee Alpheus Bull last December. Mr. Bull had served as Trustee for nearly six years and had performed his duties conscientiously and well. His loss is deeply felt by his colleagues. As his term of office had but a short time to run, the vacancy has not been filled.

For an institution which has had the experience of the past year the Mechanics' Institute affairs are in excellent shape. Its Library building, furniture and books represent about \$30,000, it has cash on hand of over \$50,000, it owes practically nothing and in addition it owns the former Post-street site, the Pavilion block and some outlying lots, all of which are unencumbered.

It is true that at present the annual receipts from dues fall several thousand dollars short of the running expenses for maintenance, taxes and insurance, besides which much more money will have to be spent for books.

Your Trustees are fully alive to the importance and the seriousness of the problems which confront them. The matter of providing a suitable permanent home which shall be in keeping with the needs of the Institute, and the matter of improving the properties to produce a revenue are receiving their careful, earnest consideration.

The Board is a unit in believing that something must be done, but it inclines to go slowly and surely rather than to jeopardize our splendid endowment by rash actions; the delays and difficulties of building have thus far caused us wisely to

pause, after meeting the immediate need for temporary quarters. It is a serious question if it is better to build at once under present conditions in order to obtain revenue or to wait. The matter of mortgaging our property for hundreds of thousands of dollars is too serious to be entered into lightly.

As to our future home, there is a very strong demand from our members that it should be down town, but there is some doubt in my mind as to whether the former site on Post street will be the best location. It appears now as if the shopping district will move a few blocks west of the old location, and as much of our popularity was on account of our convenient location, it is possible that we should move a little further west. While this may be true, the neighborhood around the old site seems now certain to become an important banking and financial center and I believe that our Post-street lot is much more valuable than before the fire; if we should decide to locate elsewhere there will be no trouble in selling at a splendid figure.

Our main support in the future will come from this Pavilion block.

We have had several propositions under consideration for long leases of this block, and one of them was all agreed on at a handsome rental, but at the last minute the parties had some difficulty in raising enough money to carry the deal through and much to our regret the matter was not consummated.

It looks now as if we will either have to lease the block in sections or to improve it ourselves. We are now considering the matter of improving part of the block ourselves.

Let me repeat that our position today is excellent; while your Trustees appreciate the necessity for giving our members the very best service, and while we realize the importance of action, yet we believe that action must be based on careful, cautious thought for the future of the Mechanics' Institute.

Let me call your attention to the fact that the Mechanics' Institute has a glorious past; it has met many crises when it

was not as wealthy as it is today, it has existed without government aid or taxation, it has received scarcely anything in the way of bequests or donations, but it stands as a monument to the earnest efforts of its Trustees, aided by the loyalty of its members.

I have full confidence that its present and future Trustees will meet their obligations in the same spirit and with the same ability that its former Trustees have and that they will always have the same loyalty and support of the membership.

In conclusion, allow me to express my sincere appreciation of the way the members have stood by our Institute during the past year of trial.

L. R. MEAD, President.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

San Francisco, March 7, 1907.

Board of Trustees and Members of the Mechanics' Institute:

Gentlemen—I have the honor to present herewith report for the year ending February 28, 1907.

Nearly all of the account books of the Institute were burned in the conflagration of last April, and a new set of books had to be opened.

At the time of the fire there was on de-

posit in various savings banks....\$ 31,463.29

On commercial deposit..... 2,327.30

Found in safes after the fire..... 335.10

\$ 34,125.69

Cash on hand as per above statement..————— \$34,125.69

RECEIPTS.

From resumption of business to March
1, 1907—

Insurance losses\$102,385.98

Salvage-sale of old metal, etc..... 231.50

Return premium—canceled insurance.. 74.40

Pavilion Block rent due before fire.... 300.00

Rebated rent Mercantile Library rooms 80.00

Interest on deposit in banks..... 1,200.38

Sundry receipts 125.30

Library—

Dues 5,173.50

Entrance fees 214.00

Life memberships 100.00

Books paid for..... 12.10

Fines and extras..... 212.70

\$110,109.86

\$144,235.55

EXPENDITURES.

From resumption of business to March
1, 1907—

Books, binding and periodicals.....\$ 20,108.30

Bills payable—

Balance due on mortgage on Pavil-
ion Block 36,000.00

Building—

Cost of new Library Building.... 6,216.27

Furniture—

Shelving, tables, chairs, desks, car-
pets, safe, etc..... 4,010.76

Insurance and salvage—

Clearing property, pulling down
walls, erecting barricades, ex-
penses collecting insurance, etc. 513.30

Advertising 51.10

Expense—

Signs, telephone, disinfectants, jan-
itor's supplies, cartage, hard-
ware, towel supply, etc..... 788.10

Fuel 165.00

Insurance—

Premiums on building, furniture
and books 1,000.00

Interest paid on mortgage..... 566.50

Lectures—

Fees, hall rent and printing..... 697.95

Legal expenses 525.00

Lighting 102.04

Old accounts—

For bills owing previous to April
18, 1906 3,737.73

Printing, stationery and postage..... 1,067.12

Rent rebated—

Rents paid for dates later than April 18, 1906.....	1,158.36
Salaries	8,100.55
Taxes	4,869.56
Water	43.30
	<hr/> \$89,720.94
March 1, 1907, cash on hand.....	\$54,514.61

The cash on hand is deposited as follows—

Bank of California, interest-bearing certificate of deposit.....	\$ 30,000.00
S. F. Savings Union, term deposit....	8,608.21
Union Trust Co., term deposit.....	1,582.65
Mutual Savings Bank, ordinary deposit	5,357.73
German Savings & Loan Society, ordinary deposit	7,462.63
Central Trust Co., term deposit.....	426.65
Central Trust Co., commercial deposit..	1,076.74
	<hr/> \$54,514.61

The total insurance carried at the time of the first last April was.....

	\$129,995.00
Of this there has been collected.....	\$102,385.98
Discounts on policies settled.....	13,109.02
	<hr/> \$115,495.00

Leaving policies still unsettled.....

	\$ 14,500.00
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As follows—

German Insurance Co. of Freeport (insolvent)	\$ 6,000.00
Atlanta Birmingham Fire Insurance Co. (insolvent).....	1,500.00
Transatlantic Fire Insurance Co. (settlement pending)	3,000.00

Williamsburgh City Fire Insurance Co. (claim resisted and suit filed)	4,000.00
	<hr/> \$14,500.00

In addition the Institute holds an order for two shares of stock in the Firemen's Fund Insurance Co.

The insurance carried at present is as follows—

Library Building	\$ 4,000.00
Furniture and fixtures.....	2,000.00
Books	14,000.00
	<hr/> \$20,000.00

The real estate owned is as follows—

Pavilion Block (bounded by Larkin, Grove, Polk and Hayes Sts.).

Post Street property (former Library site).

Lots 338 and 339 Precita Valley Lands.

Seven lots in People's Homestead Tract A.

There is no mortgage on any of this property, and the Institute has no debts except for current bills.

Respectfully submitted.

JOSEPH M. CUMMING,
Secretary Mechanics' Institute.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

San Francisco, March 5, 1907.

Board of Trustees, Mechanics' Institute:

Gentlemen—In making my annual report to you a year ago it was my privilege to call attention to the notable increase both in books and members shown by the figures then presented.

But before that report was in print our entire Library was destroyed in the fire of April 18, 1906, and the changes consequent upon that event have deprived us of a large part of our membership.

MEMBERSHIP.

Membership, April 18, 1906.....	4,150
New members up to March 1, 1907.....	216
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	4,366
Resignations up to March 1, 1907.....	989
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	3,377

There is every reason, however, to believe that this number will be still further reduced, as all of our members have not yet been heard from.

Honorary members	9
Life members	642
Subscribing members	2,726
	<hr/>
	3,377

BOOKS.

At a meeting of your Board of May 1st, 1906, the plans of your Librarian for the rehabilitation of the Library were approved, and since that time 17,850 books (of which 4,500 are fiction) have been purchased. For comparison it may be mentioned that during the twelve months ending March 1st, 1906, 4,438 volumes were received, of which 2,470 were fiction.

In the ten months since the fire we have therefore added four times as many books as during the previous year.

Less than 2,000 volumes from the old Library, which were in the hands of members at the time of the fire, have been received, and of them a comparatively small number have been incorporated in the new Library, the remainder consisting of odd volumes and books in poor condition.

The policy followed in selecting books for the new Library has been to provide fully for our special constituency, avoiding for the present any attempt to make a uniformly developed collection. Hence the subjects most fully represented on our shelves are civil, mechanical, electrical and mining engineering, industrial chemistry, building and architecture; in a different field we have a large representation of economic literature and of such subjects as accounting; naturally fiction is numerically strong, although bearing a small proportion to the other sections in point of expenditure.

GIFTS.

Among those from whom valuable gifts have been received the following should be specially mentioned: Mr. Spiers and Mr. Von Geldern, members of your Board; E. D. Adams, Esq., of New York; Mrs. Henry Dodge, and David Kerr, Esq., ex-President of the Institute; J. P. Moore, Esq., of San Francisco; Professor J. C. Branner, Stanford University.

The American Anthropological Society.
 The American Electrochemical Society.
 The American Institute of Mining Engineers.
 The Canadian Society of Civil Engineers.
 Institution of Civil Engineers, London.
 Institution of Mining and Metallurgy, London.
 The Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education.
 The John Crerar Library of Chicago.
 The New York Public Library.

Our thanks are also due to the California State Library for the loan of many books immediately after the fire.

CIRCULATION.

The statistics of circulation for the last three months are as follows:

	Total	Average	Highest
December	4,364	182	262
January	5,260	202	339
February	4,768	217	410

Respectfully submitted.

FREDERICK J. TEGGART,
Librarian.